



HIGHLAND FALLS-FORT MONTGOMERY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Michael McElduff, Superintendent of Schools

Dear HFFMCSD Families,

On April 8, a total solar eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, Canada, and the United States, including New York State. This is a rare occurrence, as the last total solar eclipse in New York was in 1925. The next total solar eclipse in the U.S. will take place in 2045, with subsequent ones in New York scheduled for 2079 and 2144. This phenomenon offers a unique opportunity for our students to witness a moment of natural wonder and scientific significance. As educators, we believe in the importance of providing our students with opportunities to engage with the world around them and to foster curiosity and exploration.

A total solar eclipse happens when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the Sun. The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk. The eclipse will reach New York at 3:16 p.m., with the Moon's shadow exiting the state by 3:29 p.m. While our area will not be in the direct path of the eclipse, we will still be able to see approximately 94% of it. Safety glasses are necessary for anyone outdoors during this event.

In preparation for the solar eclipse we have decided that it is in the best interest of our students, faculty and staff to have an early dismissal on Monday, April 8th. **The dismissal times will be as follows:**

- James I. O'Neill: 12:30 pm
- FMES Pre-K students ONLY: 1:00 pm
- FMES and HFIS K-8 students: 1:25 pm
- Out of District Students: 12:00 pm
- All after-school activities will be postponed for the day.

We believe that experiencing events like the solar eclipse can inspire a lifelong love of learning and exploration in our students. We encourage you to take this opportunity to discuss the significance of the eclipse with your child and to engage in activities that deepen their understanding of this natural phenomenon. We have shared several links related to the upcoming Solar Eclipse for you to view.

- [Eclipse safety NASA](#)
- [Citizen Scientist NASA](#)
- [How to Safely Watch a Total Solar Eclipse](#)
- [NYS Solar Eclipse Information Page](#)

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we make adjustments to our schedule to accommodate this special event. Our top priority is the safety of our faculty, staff, and students, and we appreciate your support. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your building administration.

Thank you,

Michael McElduff
Superintendent of Schools